

DESCRIPTION & TRAVEL
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The Patriot Ledger

HOUSING

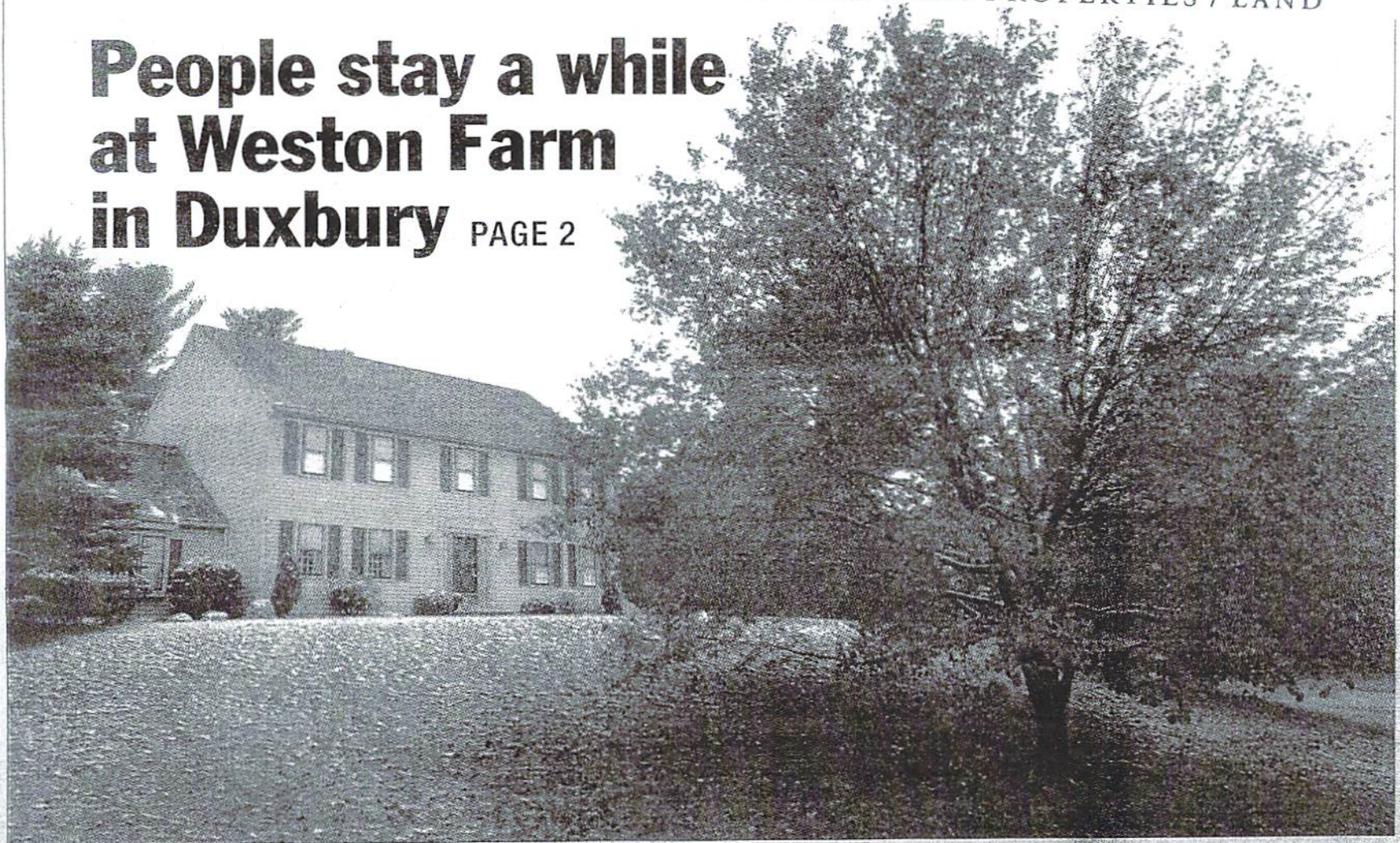
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People stay a while at Weston Farm in Duxbury

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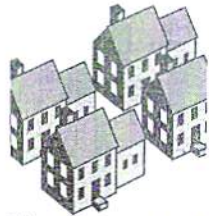


Cover Story:



GARY HIGGINS/The Patriot Ledger

Like Windy Hill Lane, all but one of the streets in Weston Farm are dead ends, making the area safer for children.



NEIGHBORHOODS

DUXBURY

Area: 37.63 square miles

POPULATION

2000: 14,890

2005: 14,958

Density: 397 res./square mile

Median age: 42

Median household income:

\$105,398

FINANCES

Tax rate: \$10.14

Town budget: \$52 million

Avg. water/sewer bill: \$491/year

Median home price

2004: \$599,950

2005: \$537,500 (through June)

Median condo price

2004: \$380,000

2005: \$350,000 (through June)

SCHOOLS

Number of students: 3,282

Number of teachers: 240

H.S. grads to 4-yr. college: 88%

H.S. grads to 2-yr. college: 3%

Median SAT score: 1087

People stay a while at Weston Farm

By KAREN GOULART

The Patriot Ledger

ON THE COVER:

Rules of the Weston Farm neighborhood in Duxbury include cedar-only roofs and color restrictions on exteriors. Keeping the property well-landscaped is a must.

GARY HIGGINS/
The Patriot Ledger

As a self-proclaimed "corporate gypsy" for 20 years, John Madden never settled in one town for very long.

When he and his wife bought a home in Duxbury's Weston Farm neighborhood, he figured they would be in town for about two years, tops.

That was 18 years ago.

The fact that Weston Farm is a planned community is one reason the Maddens bought their saltbox Colonial on Windy Hill Lane and it figures greatly in their reasons for staying.

The Maddens once lived in Reston, Va., the second-largest planned community in the United States.

Madden said he likes the idea of knowing the quality of his neighborhood is going to remain consistent.

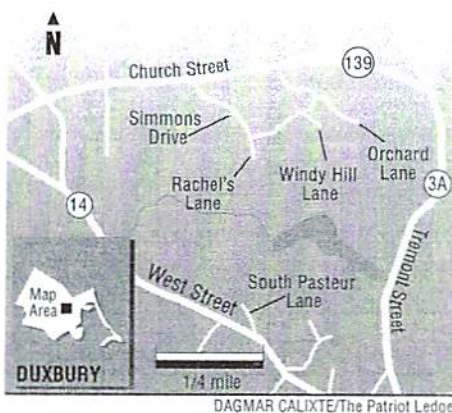
"When you go into a community like this, you know it's going to be well-maintained and your home is going to maintain its value, which is important, especially if you don't know whether you'll be leaving in two years," Madden said.

Madden has done more than pay lip service to the attributes of a planned community: He has been president of the Weston Farm Home Owners Association, as well as its treasurer, and has run the neighborhood's landscape group.

"I've seen a lot of people come and go and everyone has been appreciative of the neighborhood," Madden said. "Some people say (a planned community) is restrictive, but it helps maintain real estate values and it's just a nice, pleasant place to come home to."

Some of the rules of the neighborhood include cedar-only roofs and color restrictions on exteriors. Keeping the property well-landscaped is a must.

Weston Farm/Duxbury



Until the recent slowdown in the housing market, Madden said, it was rare to see a house for sale. When there was a home on the market, the turnover was generally quick.

Three homes are for sale in Weston Farm. Barbara Scholberg, a real estate agent with Coldwell Real Estate, is representing homeowners on Rachael's Lane. She said the asking prices on those homes range from \$699,000 to \$859,000, the standard range for the neighborhood, which includes two-, three- and four-bedroom homes.

The neighborhood was built in the early 1980s and the trees and plants on each carefully landscaped lawn have grown to blend in with the lush clusters of older flora purposely spared during construction.

Aside from their own back yards, residents of Simmons Drive, Rachael's Lane, Orchard Lane,

Windy Hill Lane and South Pasture Lane can enjoy the "common areas" of their neighborhood which include trails to thickly wooded conservation land as well as a tennis court and a clubhouse.

Except for Simmons Drive, which forms a horseshoe shape leading to Church Street at each end, each street is a dead end. This appeals to families by providing streets where children can play, Scholberg said.

Along with the guarantee of a well-maintained neighborhood and close proximity to downtown Duxbury and downtown Marshfield, the safety of the neighborhood was a major factor that drew the Pelhams to buy a home there 17 years ago.

"We had young children and the neighborhood was a good environment for them as they were growing up," Linda Pelham said.

The association recently created a web site with information about the neighborhood, a message board, links to important local information and spaces to share pictures and recipes.

One thing that's not likely to change soon is the Maddens' presence in Weston Farm.

"We're comfortable here," Madden said.

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